

68TH CONGRESS }
2d Session }

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

{ REPORT
No. 1630

ERECTION OF A TABLET UPON THE REVOLUTIONARY BATTLE FIELD OF WHITE PLAINS, STATE OF NEW YORK

FEBRUARY 28, 1925.—Committed to the Committee of the Whole House on the
state of the Union and ordered to be printed

Mr. BACON, from the Committee on the Library, submitted the
following

REPORT

[To accompany H. R. 12389]

The Committee on the Library, to which was referred H. R. 12389, for the erection of a monument upon the revolutionary battle field of White Plains, State of New York, having considered the same, report favorably thereon with the recommendation that it pass with the following amendments:

On page 1, line 11, strike out the word "monument"; page 2, line 5, strike out the figures "\$10,000" and insert therefor figures "\$2,500."

The measure as amended will provide authority for the Secretary of War to erect upon this battle field a suitably inscribed marker to indicate the main position of the revolutionary army, which on that occasion was under the immediate command of General Washington; also to erect a similarly inscribed marker upon Chatterton Hill, the outpost position.

It came with some surprise to your committee that thus far the location of this important episode on the Revolutionary War has never been indicated by the Government in manner to preserve its historic significance.

The so-called Battle of White Plains marked a critical situation in the Revolutionary War. It was, in effect, a complete strategic victory for the patriot army, ending to its advantage a campaign fraught with dire possibilities for the cause of the Colonies.

It will be recalled that the main strategic objective of the British at that time was the control of the Hudson River Valley, which, once in their possession, would furnish means of communication between their armies in Canada and in New York; also its possession would have cut the Colonies in two parts, separating New England from the Colonies west and south. The Battle of White Plains was

for the patriot army the successful culmination of the struggle for that valley. After the serious defeat of General Washington's army in the battle of Long Island and his practically constant retreat throughout the length of Manhattan Island and Westchester he finally prepared to give battle on a field of his own choosing at White Plains. Not only did it finally check the advance of the British Army but its outcome restored in a high degree the confidence and morale of the patriot army.

Washington had withdrawn from lower Manhattan to Harlem Heights, where, after a sharp engagement, he established an intrenched line extending across from the Hudson on his right to the Harlem Heights on the left, thus holding Howe in New York City, and being able by means of Forts Washington and Lee to close the river to British vessels. Fearing a frontal attack, and in order to drive Washington from this strong position and take the river forts, Howe undertook a turning movement by shifting his forces to Pells Point on Long Island Sound. As this would put him in the American rear, Washington retired by a parallel movement, keeping in constant contact with the enemy. He determined the time had arrived to face his antagonist in a general engagement. He selected the field of White Plains, to which his entire army had arrived by October 26. The position selected was along the Tarrytown-White Plains Road across the path of the British advance. On the right of the American position was Chatterton Hill, which Washington had occupied. Howe's two advancing columns were deployed in line of battle on the 28th of October. He attacked the hill with a powerful support of artillery. He met with a determined opposition, his assaulting columns being several times driven back. But finally, after heavy losses and largely due to lack of artillery, the patriot forces were obliged to withdraw from the hill. Washington intrenched his army on higher ground in a position of considerable strategic strength and awaited the general battle expected to be inevitable upon the following day. But Howe, deterred by the strength of the position and the restored morale of his foe demonstrated in the previous day's fighting, drew off his whole army to the southwest toward the Hudson River. This ended a critical campaign. Washington retiring still farther to the stronger positions on the heights of North Castle, there prepared for his campaign in New Jersey.

